

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the following claims which are pending in the present application:

1. (Withdrawn) A system comprising:

a search engine server having a first computer-readable medium

containing information for a search provider's web page;

an advertiser server coupled to the search engine server and having a

second computer-readable medium containing information for an advertiser's web page;

and

a user computer coupled to the search engine server and the advertiser's

server, the

user computer having a monitor that is configured to display web pages;

wherein the search provider's web page, when displayed on the monitor,

includes ads with each ad including a link to an advertiser's web page, where an

advertiser is an entity whose ad is displayed on the search provider's web page, and a

position of each ad on the search provider's web page is dependent upon whether the

search provider is due payment from the advertiser.

2. (Withdrawn) The system according to claim 1, wherein the position of

the ad on the search provider's web page is dependent upon whether a link included in an

ad has received a predetermined number of clicks within a predetermined period of time.

3. (Withdrawn) The system according to claim 1, wherein;

a sponsor is an advertiser that has a financial agreement with the search provider regarding the inclusion of the sponsor's ad on the search provider's web page;

a non-sponsor is an advertiser whose ad is displayed on the search provider's web page free of charge; and

non-sponsors' ads are displayed in a region of the search provider's web page below another region of the search provider's web page where sponsors' ads are displayed.

4. (Withdrawn) The system according to claim 3, wherein the search provider is due a fee from a sponsor every time a user selects a link associated with the sponsor's ad displayed on the search provider's web page.

5. (Withdrawn) The system according to claim 3, wherein the sponsor's ad has associated with it a cap amount that is the maximum amount of money that a sponsor can be billed by the search provider for the sponsor's ad within a billing cycle.

6. (Withdrawn) The system according to claim 5, wherein a location where the sponsor's ad is displayed on the search provider's web page is influenced by a difference between the cap amount and a total accrued debt owed by the sponsor to the search provider for the sponsor's ad.

7. (Withdrawn) The system according to claim 6, wherein the sponsor's ad is located within the region of the search provider's web page with non-sponsors' ads

when the total accrued debt owed by the sponsor to the search provider for the sponsor's ad equals the cap amount.

8. (Withdrawn) The system according to claim 5, wherein the sponsor can change the cap amount.

9. (Withdrawn) A first computer-readable medium included in a search engine server, wherein the first computer-readable medium contains a program configured to interact with a database stored in a second computer-readable medium also included in the search engine server, wherein the search engine server is configured to couple to an advertiser server having a third computer-readable medium containing information for an advertiser's web page, and wherein the search engine server is configured to couple to a user computer having a monitor that is configured to display a web page, the program comprising information used to generate a search provider's web page, wherein:

the search provider's web page is displayed on the monitor and includes ads that are stored in the database, with each ad including a link to an advertiser's web page, where an advertiser is an entity whose ad is displayed on the search provider's web page, and a sponsor is an advertiser that has a financial agreement with the search provider regarding the inclusion of the sponsor's ad on the search provider's web page;

the search provider is due a fee from the sponsor every time a user selects a link included in the sponsor's ad displayed on the search provider's web page;

the sponsor's ad has associated with it a cap amount that is the maximum amount of money that a sponsor can be billed by the search provider for the sponsor's ad within a billing cycle; and

a location where the sponsor's ad is displayed on the search provider's web page is influenced by a difference between the cap amount and a total accrued debt owed by the sponsor to the search provider for the sponsor's ad.

10. (Withdrawn) The program according to claim 9, wherein:

a non-sponsor is an advertiser whose ad is displayed on the search provider's web page free of charge; and

non-sponsors' ads are displayed in a region of the search provider's web page below another region of the search provider's web page where sponsors' ads are displayed.

11. (Withdrawn) The program according to claim 10, wherein the sponsor's ad is located within a region of the search provider's web page with non-sponsors' ads when the total accrued debt owed by the sponsor to the search provider for the sponsor's ad equals the cap amount.

12. (Withdrawn) The program according to claim 9, wherein the sponsor can change the cap amount.

13. (Withdrawn) A method for organizing ads on a search provider's web page, wherein information related to the search provider's web page is stored in a first computer-readable medium included in a search engine server, wherein the information related to the search provider's web page is configured to interact with advertiser information in an advertiser database stored in a second computer-readable medium that also is included in the search engine server, wherein an advertiser is an entity having an ad that is displayed on the search provider's web page, wherein the search engine server is configured to couple to an advertiser server having a third computer-readable medium containing information for an advertiser's web page, wherein the search engine server is configured to couple to a user computer having a monitor that is configured to display a web page, and wherein each sponsor's ad has associated with it a cap amount that is the maximum amount of money that a sponsor can be billed by the search provider for the sponsor's ad within a billing cycle, the method comprising:

performing a category search using the search engine server for ads included in the advertiser database;

creating a list of sponsors' ads based on results of the category search; and  
positioning the sponsors' ads on the search provider's web page based on a difference between the cap amount and a total accrued debt owed by the sponsor to the search provider for the sponsor's ad.

14. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 13, further comprising:  
calculating a geographic region of consideration; and

removing all sponsor ads from the list of sponsors' ads when the respective sponsor's business location is outside of the geographic region of consideration.

15. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 14, wherein the geographic region of consideration is a circle having a center point and a radius, and the radius is multiplied by a market multiplier factor that varies as a function of a location of the center point.

16. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 14, further comprising:  
calculating a pacing factor; and

comparing a random number, having a value between zero and one, to the pacing factor for each sponsor's ad and displaying the sponsor's ad on the search provider's web page only if the pacing factor is greater than the random number.

17. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 16, further comprising sorting the sponsors' ads and displaying the sponsors' ads on the search provider's web page according to the cost-per-click multiplied by the click-through rate associated with each sponsor's ad.

18. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 16, further comprising:  
calculating a sorting factor; and

sorting the sponsors' ads and displaying the sponsors' ads on the search provider's web page according to the sorting factor.

19. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 13, wherein a non-sponsor is an advertiser whose ad is displayed on the search provider's web page free of charge.

20. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 19, further comprising displaying non-sponsors' ads in a region of the search provider's web page below another region of the search provider's web page where sponsors' ads are displayed.

21. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 20, further comprising positioning the sponsor's ad within a region of the search provider's web page with non-sponsors' ads when the total accrued debt owed by the sponsor to the search provider for the sponsor's ad equals the cap amount.

22. (Currently Amended) A computer system comprising:  
at least one processor;  
a medium connected to the processor; and  
a set of data on the medium and being at least readable by the processor,  
the set of data including:  
advertiser payment information;  
a query receiving module function executable by the processor to receive a search query over a network from a user computer system;

geographic data of a location;

a mapping module function executable by the processor to map the query to at least one sales category among a plurality of sales categories;

an advertiser data store including a plurality of advertiser entries;

a search engine to extract a plurality of search result from the advertiser entries based on the sales category and the geographic location data;

a ranking module function executable by the processor to rank the search results based on at least the advertiser payment information into a ranked set of search results; and

a transmission module function executable by the processor to transmit the set of ranked search results over a network to the user computer system, each one of the ranked search results including a link to retrieve a respective advertiser web page over a network from a respective advertiser computer system utilizing the user computer system.

23. (Previously Presented) The computer system of claim 22 wherein the ranking is dependent upon whether a link included in an ad has received a predetermined number of clicks within a predetermined period of time.

24. (Previously Presented) The computer system of claim 22 wherein a sponsor is an advertiser that has a financial agreement with the search provider regarding the inclusion of the sponsor's ad on the search provider's web page, a non-sponsor is an advertiser whose ad is displayed on the search provider's web page free of charge; and

non-sponsors' ads are displayed in a region of the search provider's web page below another region of the search provider's web page where sponsors' ads are displayed.

25. (Previously Presented) The computer system of claim 24 wherein the search provider is due a fee from a sponsor every time a user selects a link associated with the sponsor's ad displayed on the search provider's web page.

26. (Previously Presented) The computer system of claim 25 wherein the sponsor's ad has associated with it a cap amount that is the maximum amount of money that a sponsor can be billed by the search provider for the sponsor's ad within a billing cycle.

27. (Previously Presented) The computer system of claim 26 wherein a location where the sponsor's ad is displayed on the search provider's web page is influenced by a difference between the cap amount and a total accrued debt owed by the sponsor to the search provider for the sponsor's ad.

28. (Previously Presented) The computer system of claim 27 wherein the sponsor's ad is located within the region of the search provider's web page with non-sponsors' ads when the total accrued debt owed by the sponsor to the search provider for the sponsor's ad equals the cap amount.

29. (Previously Presented) The computer system of claim 27 wherein the sponsor can change the cap amount.

30. (Currently Amended) The computer system of claim 22 wherein the advertiser data determines forms a basis for which search results are extracted by the search engine.

31. (Currently Amended) The computer system of claim 22, the set of data further comprising: a geo-location module function that determines a location of the user computer system.

32. (Currently Amended) The computer system of claim 31, the set of data further comprising: a geo-location module function calculating a geographic region of consideration, and removing all sponsor ads from the list of sponsors' ads when the respective sponsor's business location is outside of the geographic region of consideration.

33. (Previously Presented) The computer system of claim 32 wherein the geographic region of consideration is a circle having a center point and a radius, and the radius is multiplied by a market multiplier factor that varies as a function of a location of the center point.

34. (Currently Amended) A computer-based method comprising:

storing advertiser information on [[a]] at least one computer-readable medium;

storing geographic data of a location on the medium;

storing a plurality of advertiser entries on the medium;

receiving a search query over a network from a user computer system at a server computer system;

mapping the query to at least one sales category among a plurality of sales categories utilizing a processor of the server computer system;

operating a search engine to extract a plurality of search result from the advertiser entries based on the sales category and the geographic location data utilizing the processor;

ranking the search results based on at least the advertiser payment information into a ranked set of search results utilizing the processor; and

transmitting the set of ranked search results from the server computer system over a network to the user computer system, each one of the ranked search results including a link to retrieve a respective advertiser web page over a network from a respective advertiser computer system utilizing the user computer system.

35. (Previously Presented) The computer-based method of claim 34 wherein the ranking is dependent upon whether a link included in an ad has received a predetermined number of clicks within a predetermined period of time.

36. (Previously Presented) The computer-based method of claim 34 further comprising: displaying non-sponsors' ads in a region of the search provider's web page below another region of the search provider's web page where sponsors' ads are displayed.

37. (Previously Presented) The computer-based method of claim 36 wherein the search provider is due a fee from a sponsor every time a user selects a link associated with the sponsor's ad displayed on the search provider's web page.

38. (Previously Presented) The computer-based method of claim 37 wherein the sponsor's ad has associated with it a cap amount that is the maximum amount of money that a sponsor can be billed by the search provider for the sponsor's ad within a billing cycle.

39. (Previously Presented) The computer-based method of claim 38 wherein a location where the sponsor's ad is displayed on the search provider's web page is influenced by a difference between the cap amount and a total accrued debt owed by the sponsor to the search provider for the sponsor's ad.

40. (Previously Presented) The computer-based method of claim 39 wherein the sponsor's ad is located within the region of the search provider's web page with non-sponsors' ads when the total accrued debt owed by the sponsor to the search provider for the sponsor's ad equals the cap amount.

41. (Previously Presented) The computer-based method of claim 39 wherein the sponsor can change the cap amount.

42. (Currently Amended) The computer-based method of claim 34 wherein the advertiser data ~~determines~~forms a basis for which search results are extracted by the search engine.

43. (Previously Presented) The computer-based method of claim 34 further comprising:

calculating a pacing factor; and  
comparing a random number, having a value between zero and one, to the pacing factor for each sponsor's ad and displaying the sponsor's ad on the search provider's web page only if the pacing factor is greater than the random number.

44. (Previously Presented) The computer-based method of claim 43 further comprising sorting the sponsors' ads and displaying the sponsors' ads on the search provider's web page according to the cost-per-click multiplied by the click-through rate associated with each sponsor's ad.

45. (Previously Presented) The computer-based method of claim 44 further comprising:

calculating a sorting factor; and

sorting the sponsors' ads and displaying the sponsors' ads on the search provider's web page according to the sorting factor.

46. (Currently Amended) The computer-based method of claim 34 further comprising: a geo-location module that determines determining a location of the user computer system utilizing a geo-location function.

47. (Previously Presented) The computer-based method of claim 46 further comprising: a geo-location module calculating a geographic region of consideration, and removing all sponsor ads from the list of sponsors' ads when the respective sponsor's business location is outside of the geographic region of consideration.

48. (Previously Presented) The computer-based method of claim 47 wherein the geographic region of consideration is a circle having a center point and a radius, and the radius is multiplied by a market multiplier factor that varies as a function of a location of the center point.

49. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable medium having stored thereon a set of data that is at least readable executable by a processor of a computer to execute a method comprising:

storing advertiser information on a medium;

storing geographic data of a location on the medium;

storing a plurality of advertiser entries on the medium;

receiving a search query over a network from a user computer system;

mapping the query to at least one sales category among a plurality of sales categories;

operating a search engine to extract a plurality of search result from the advertiser entries based on the sales category and the geographic location data;

ranking the search results based on at least the advertiser payment information into a ranked set of search results; and

transmitting the set of ranked search results over a network to the user computer system, each one of the ranked search results including a link to retrieve a respective advertiser web page over a network from a respective advertiser computer system utilizing the user computer system.

50. (Previously Presented) The computer-readable medium of claim 49 wherein the ranking is dependent upon whether a link included in an ad has received a predetermined number of clicks within a predetermined period of time.

51. (Previously Presented) The computer-readable medium of claim 49 further comprising: displaying non-sponsors' ads in a region of the search provider's web page below another region of the search provider's web page where sponsors' ads are displayed.

52. (Previously Presented) The computer-readable medium of claim 51 wherein the search provider is due a fee from a sponsor every time a user selects a link associated with the sponsor's ad displayed on the search provider's web page.

53. (Previously Presented) The computer-readable medium of claim 52 wherein the sponsor's ad has associated with it a cap amount that is the maximum amount of money that a sponsor can be billed by the search provider for the sponsor's ad within a billing cycle.

54. (Previously Presented) The computer-readable medium of claim 53 wherein a location where the sponsor's ad is displayed on the search provider's web page is influenced by a difference between the cap amount and a total accrued debt owed by the sponsor to the search provider for the sponsor's ad.

55. (Previously Presented) The computer-readable medium of claim 54 wherein the sponsor's ad is located within the region of the search provider's web page with non-sponsors' ads when the total accrued debt owed by the sponsor to the search provider for the sponsor's ad equals the cap amount.

56. (Previously Presented) The computer-readable medium of claim 54 wherein the sponsor can change the cap amount.

57. (Currently Amended) The computer-readable medium of claim 49 wherein the advertiser data determines forms a basis for which search results are extracted by the search engine.

58. (Previously Presented) The computer-readable medium of claim 49 further comprising:

calculating a pacing factor; and  
comparing a random number, having a value between zero and one, to the pacing factor for each sponsor's ad and displaying the sponsor's ad on the search provider's web page only if the pacing factor is greater than the random number.

59. (Previously Presented) The computer-readable medium of claim 58 further comprising sorting the sponsors' ads and displaying the sponsors' ads on the search provider's web page according to the cost-per-click multiplied by the click-through rate associated with each sponsor's ad.

60. (Previously Presented) The computer-readable medium of claim 59 further comprising:

calculating a sorting factor; and  
sorting the sponsors' ads and displaying the sponsors' ads on the search provider's web page according to the sorting factor.

61. (Currently Amended) The computer-readable medium of claim 49, the data further comprising: a geo-location module function that determines a location of the user computer system.

62. (Previously Presented) The computer-readable medium of claim 61 further comprising: a geo-location module calculating a geographic region of consideration, and removing all sponsor ads from the list of sponsors' ads when the respective sponsor's business location is outside of the geographic region of consideration.

63. (Previously Presented) The computer-readable medium of claim 62 wherein the geographic region of consideration is a circle having a center point and a radius, and the radius is multiplied by a market multiplier factor that varies as a function of a location of the center point.

64. (New) The system of claim 26 wherein the set of data further includes a pacing function that calculates a billing frequency based on the cap amount and a future date or time.

65. (New) The computer-based method of claim 38, further comprising executing a pacing function that calculates a billing frequency based on the cap amount and a future date or time.

66. (New) The computer-readable medium of claim 53, the method further comprising executing a pacing function that calculates a billing frequency based on the cap amount and a future date or time.